उपसभापति : मिनिस्टर साहब यहां पर बैठे हुए हैं।

The Minister of State for External Affairs will take care of the matter is being raised here.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): Madam, we will take note of what the hon. Member has satd. Our effort has been to streamline and to make or passport offices efficient and convenient for all people using them. We are replying as much as possible and computerisation so that the subjective element is removed. A lot more needs to be done. Some new legislation has also come in handy which allows for giving the passports without police verification if it is not available within a month. And thereafter verification or confirmation of that passport can be done. But whatever suggestions have come from the hon. Member, I will pass them on to my colleague, Mr. Bhatia, who is directly in charge of passports. We will surely do whatever is necessary to ensure that passports are given more conveniently.

उपसभापति : मिनिस्टर साहब ने बहुत कुछ अच्छा आश्वासन दे दिया है।

श्री अनन्त राम जायसवाल : (उत्तर प्रदेश) : जो विषय श्री मुहम्मद मसूद खान जी ने उठाया है उसके साथ अपने आप को जोड़ते हुए यह निवेदन करना चाहता हूं कि पूरे जोर के साथ इस विषय को न मालूम कितनी बार मैंने उठाया है और कितनी ही चिट्ठियां प्रधान मंत्री से लेकर विदेश विभाग में जितने मंत्री हैं सब को लिखे हैं। चाहे दिल्ली का पासपोर्ट आफिस हो, चाहे कोई भी रीजनल पासपोर्ट आफिस हो।

जितना वक्त पहले पासपोर्ट मिलने में लगता था उससे दुगुना समय आज लग रहा है। इसलिए मैं मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूं कि वे खाली आश्वासन मत दें, इस ओर उनका ध्यान खींचने के लिए जो सवाल किये गये हैं, जो चिट्ठियां लिखी गई हैं, उनका क्या हुआ, उसको देखें और इसको सुधारें।

श्री राम रतन राम : (उत्तर प्रदेश) : मैं मसूद साहब ने जो कहा है उससे अपने को असोसियेट करता हूं और आपके माध्यम से सरकार का ध्यान इस ओर आकर्षित करना चाहता हूं कि लखनऊ पासपोर्ट आफिस करप्शन का अड्डा बना हुआ है। बगैर मेडीयिटर वहां पर पासपोर्ट नहीं मिलता। अभी हाल ही में पत्रकारों ने इसके एजेंट का फोटो लेने की कोशिश की तो उनके साथ मारपीट करने की कोशिश की गई। पासपोर्ट आफिसर ने जब प्रेस में माफी मांगी जब जाकर मामला सुलझा... (**व्यवधान**)...लखनऊ में। मैं लखनऊ की बात कर रहा हूं। वहां पर बगैर एजेंट के कोई भी पासपोर्ट नहीं बन पा रहा है और वहां पर गरीब आदमियों को तकलीफ हो रही है। इस ओर मैं आपके माध्यम से सरकार का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहता हूं।

Rail Need to allocate more funds for Rail gauge conversiin in Tamil Nadu

SHRI J. S. RAJU (Tamil Nadu): I wish to draw the attention of the Government towards the height of neglect meted out to Tamil Nadu by the Indian Railways. Central Government has done very little to improve the Railway network in Tamil Nadu.

There is a total of 1,09,338 kms. long railway line in India out of which 72,935 kms consist of broad gauge. Whereas in the entire Tamil Nadu there is just 4010 kms railway line laid by the Britishers, there is hardly a few hundred kms long broad gauge line in the entire State. The rest is metre gauge and also narrow gauge at some stretches of Western Ghats.

There are two major railway lines in Tamil Nadu. One is the main line from Madras Egmore to Trichy via Tanjore and the other is the cord

line from Madras Egmore to Thirunelveli via Dindigul. These two lines are the lifeline of the State. Both are more metre gauge and mostly single lines. Because of this, even the express trains are halted for hours, causing unspeakable agony to the travelling public.

Again while there are many express and superfast trains from big cities like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Bangalore to the interior parts of various States, the only point connected in Tamil Nadu is Madras. The one exception is a train called 'Himsagar' running from Jammu to Kanyakumari at the speed of a goods train and that too mostly through Kerala because of the absence of broad gauge network in Tamil Nadu. All those passengers coming to Tamil Nadu through different trains have to get down at Madras Central, and reach Madras Egmore through road, to take yet another train to travel to different parts of the State. People of no other State are put to this kind of inconvenience. It is a matter of regret that Madras Central could not be connected to Madras Eg' more, a distance of about 3 kms.

Now the Railway Ministry is talking volumes about the unigauge conversion throughout the country. For the year 1993-94, an amount of Rs. 815 crores has been earmarked for unigauge conversion in the entire country. But Tamil Nadu has been povided very little funds for gauge conversion. For the last ten years the Railways have been talking of broadgauge conversion but so far they could lay not even 150 kms of broadgauge line. I don't know how they are going to convert the entire metre gauge into broad gauge in just three years. I accuse the Centre of cheating the people through false promises. This attitude only reflects the mind of partiality of the Centre. Even the execution of metro railway project in Madras is delayed because of the meagre funds allocation each year.

Tamil Nadu is again unlucky because for the last several years no one from Tamil Nadu because the Railway Minister. That is why Bangalore and Hyderabad had the privilege of getting Rajdhani Express last year itself, thanks to Mr. Jaffer Sharief and Mr. Mallikarjun. This year they reluctantly introduced a Rajdhani Express to Madras which runs once a week and on inconvenient times. While food is supplied within the fare charged in all the Rajdhani trains, Madras Rajdhani Express is singled out and one has to pay for the food in this train. I think this is yet another privilege given to Tamil Nadu. I don't know whether my Congress friends have already availed themselves of this privilege. I appeal to the Railway Ministry to make up the neglect done to Tamil Nadu so far More funds should be allocated to Tamil Nadu for conversion of all lines into broad gauge at the earliest. It is time the Centre realised that connecting Madras Central with Madras Egmore is vital and cannot wait. At the same time, double lines should be laid, while undertaking conversion, so that trains from metropolitan cities of the country could be run to the various cities in Tamil Nadu like Tanjore, Trichy, Madurai, etc., directly.

SHRI MISA R. GANESAN (Tamil Nadu): Madam, I associate myself with this Special Mention made by Mr. J. S. Raju.

SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN (Tamil Nadu): Madam, I also associate myself with this Special Mention.

SHRI T. A. MOHAMMED SAQHY (Tamil Nadu): Madam, I also associate myself with it.

Problems being faced by the Neyveli Lignite Corporation

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: (Tamil Nadu): Madam Deputy Chairman, I am greatful to you for this opportunity. (*Interruptions*)